Models of the Way in the Theory of Noh

著者	PINNINGTON Noel John
journal or publication title	Nichibunken Japan review : Journal of the International Research Center for Japanese Studies
volume	18
page range	29-55
year	2006-01-01
その他の言語のタイトル	能の理論における「道」のモデル
URL	http://doi.org/10.15055/00000235

Japan Review, 2006, **18**:29-55

Models of the Way in the Theory of Noh

Noel John Pinnington
Kyushu University Asia Center, Hakozaki, Japan

From the late Heian period, Japanese practitioners have written a series of works describing their arts. Underlying them is a vision of the arts as *michi*, paths through life, an image which implies an underlying unity to all human specializations. This unity resulted in a series of creative intellectual borrowings across different areas of knowledge, and an intense investigation of the processes by which the artist is trained and the artifact is produced, but there is a corresponding lack of aesthetic analysis and little interest in the artist as an individual. In this study, the writings of fifteenth-century noh actors, Zeami and Zenchiku, are investigated as exemplars of the intellectual approaches of *michi* in its formative period. In closing the character of writings about *michi* is contrasted with approaches taken in the European tradition to theorizing about the arts.

***Keywords*:** noh, dramatic theory, art theory, *michi*, Zeami, Zenchiku, medieval intellectual history, aesthetics

In the late Heian period, Japanese specialists in the literary and other arts began to attempt detailed, comprehensive descriptions of their traditions. It is striking the extent to which these descriptions borrow terminology and ideas from other activities, religious as well as artistic. The works of the noh actor Zeami in the fifteenth century might be considered the pinnacle of such writing. They display a vigorous bricolage[1] in which paradigms from a wide range of other activities are applied, modified, and stretched to fit the players' needs and circumstances. A unifying idea informing such descriptions of the arts is the treatment of human activities as "paths," progressions through stages to a destination, and an associated expectation that those who travel such paths are transformed thereby. This approach is of such power that it has found unending application in Japan. Nevertheless, one cannot help wondering whether its comprehensive fertility lies behind, for example, the failure of medieval Japan to produce what in the Western tradition might be considered a theory of aesthetics. In this essay we shall trace how a number of models of the way converged to create

a general "way of the arts" in medieval Japan, and look in particular at the use of the paradigm by performers of noh. We shall then consider some of the ramifications of this paradigm for artistic theory in Japan.

Buddhist Cultures: Marga, Tao and Michi

Buswell and Gimello argue that the prominence in studies of comparative religion of such matters as faith and prayer, reflects a bias deriving from the European tradition.[2] They particularly highlight *marga* (Sanskrit: path) as a theme central to Buddhism that might be more widely employed in cross-cultural discussions. The path or way is important in any religious life; it is fundamental to Christian culture, for example. Buddhism, however, has special reasons for emphasizing the path. It proposes two contrasting realities, a world of illusion and a world of truth. It teaches (in the fourth noble truth) that there is a path from the first to the second. Its central narrative is that a man found that path and thereby became the Buddha. All Buddhists are enjoined to tread the path. The centrality of the path in Buddhism might be expected to have privileged action and performance over conceptual systems and belief. Buddhism certainly has its philosophical systems, but the priority of actually walking the path is frequently stressed, and is reflected in the many schematic descriptions of spiritual progress. Buswell and Gimello summarize various schema: the noble eightfold path, the four approaches, the thirty-seven factors of awakening, the five paths, the six or ten stages, the bodhisattva path in fifty-three stages according to the Hua-yen 華厳 (Jp. Kegon) tradition, the five ranks according to Sōtō 曹洞 Zen. These analyses demonstrate the fertility of the metaphor of the path. In them the elements of the path are conceived in different ways; some list places to be passed through and left behind, others skills to be mastered in turn and carried with one as qualifications, and others are typologies of living beings or mental states, classified according to their distance from enlightenment. All images of the path in Buddhism are problematic, for they represent a bridge between states that are either exclusive (delusion and awakening) or, from another point of view, identical (samsara and nirvana), but in any case difficult to see as linked termini at the ends of a continuum. They also, moreover, bring certain matters into easier focus than others. The emphasis on the process, for one thing, tends to give priority to experience over discursive knowledge; knowledge arrived at through practicing a certain life is different from that attained by argument or discussion, not least in its non-verbalized elements.

The path may be a good perspective from which to compare religions, but it is more than that. Religions are actually instances of a broader category: traditional ways of living one's life. In medieval Japan, the term *michi* 道 (or *dō*, as it is usually read in compounds) described such a category, for it embraced religious and secular traditions, particularly certain occupations and artistic vocations. At first sight, the image of the path might seem an innocent one for describing professional ways of life, but in fact it carries with it inherent notions. The prioritizing of experience mentioned above is one. Another, generally unremarked, aspect of the path is its focus on the individual. On the face of it, there is the path and then there

are the people who travel it. But the path is itself no more than the tracing of individuals, and although they can be multiplied into a whole community, each travels the path on his own, no one can do it for him. Preconceptions also inhere concerning the nature of the individual that travels. Within Buddhist ways at least, the personal characteristics of the individual are actually the reflections of loci on the path, and thus not essential. That is to say, the path is a journey through potential personalities, from ignorance, greed, and hatred to the ideal personality of the Buddha. Thus while individuals are central units in any discussion of the path, they are divorced from their personal qualities, which are seen as mere habits, to be disposed of where necessary, and replaced by better ones. This of course has significance for the way the arts were conceived in Japan; the outlook is very different from a theory of the arts that might derive from, say, the parable of the talents.[3]

Konishi Jin'ichi, in his study of *michi* as a medieval ideal, has sought the defining characteristics of artistic occupations self-nominated as *michi*.[4] The stance he adopts is not unproblematic; he reifies the concept of *michi*, treating it as a distinct essence whose various characteristics can be perceived in medieval writings, much as a biologist might reconstruct the dodo by referring to nineteenth-century observations. Konishi never seems to doubt that there was a single consistent phenomenon referred to by the term "*michi*," although he sees its different characteristics coming into expression at different times. Konishi's approach leads him to a schematic description: a *michi* is one possessed of certain characteristics—an ethos of conformity in teaching, a restrictive requirement of specialization, transmission over several generations, attainment of a universal wisdom, and so on. His formulation is valuable for the discussion of particular cases, but it obscures the kind of tensions and negotiations of meanings that we find in practice. The graph for *michi* was used in Heian Japan in different contexts with fairly precise and separate connotations. These distinct usages were not lost in medieval Japan. Nevertheless there is evidence of a growing assumption that different *michi* might share structural similarities, and that statements made by experts in one field might be useful for those active in other fields. In the fourteenth century this developed into the idea that there is an art of living, the *michi* of human life. The sayings of experts in separate fields were seen as appropriate sources for general wisdom. Later we find arts identifying themselves within a number of polarities related to the path; for example we can read Nijō Yoshimoto's 二条良基 analysis of renga (linked-verse) as an anti-path, defining it in contrast to waka (by which I mean tanka, thirty-one-syllable poetry). Fifteenth-century writers were able to negotiate these and other examples. There was, however, another tendency to idealize a profound structural identity among paths. The Chinese idea of the unity of the three creeds—Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism, became popular in a Japanese form as the unity of Shinto, Chinese philosophy and Buddhism. An important aspect of such cross-fertilization and structural identification was that of prestige or of legitimation. In earlier times, a parallel perceived between an art and, say, the Buddhist path, lent it authority. Such connections were used as a defense against the supposed sinfulness of court arts, an idea deriving from Buddhism itself. The identification of Buddhism with a particular art, even metaphorically, enabled that art to cross the border from profane to sacred, drawing the teeth of a Buddhist

critique. In the medieval period, with the adoption of Zen paradigms for the path, we find that matters of authority, legitimacy and prestige become more complex, for the adoption of religious models for the path entails the adoption of their legitimating ideologies as well.

Geidō: Ways of the Arts

Professor W. J. Boot of Leiden University once remarked that a particular characteristic of Muromachi thought was the intense expectation that all things should turn out to be "one." With regard to the concept of *michi* qua artistic way, the balance between this expectation and an actual requirement that true *michi* should be demonstrably identical seems to have been crossed in one generation in noh. While Zeami Motokiyo 世阿弥元清 (1363-1443), of the Kanze troupe, used intellectual systems from other ways of life in the explication of his own, Konparu Zenchiku 金春禅竹 (1405-1468) believed that if his own systems were intelligible in other spheres, this was evidence for their validity. This is an important stage in a long dialogue stretching back to earlier times, when different ways were *sui generis*. To appreciate Zeami and Zenchiku's positions, let us briefly survey the earlier development of the concept of *michi*.

The term "michi" is used in an abstract sense as early as the *Man'yōshū* 万葉集, where we find it signifying "lives," in the sense of paths through life, from birth to death: *kaku bakari / subenaki monoka / yo no naka no michi* かくばかり術無きものか世間の道 (are they all such desperate things, lives lived in this world?).[5] This usage persists, and carries with it a sense of one's fate, or perhaps karma—we are born into a certain social and physical position in this world, and consequently have to live in a certain way, until we die. It is thus similar to the significance of the Chinese reading of *michi* as *dō* in *rokudō* 六道, the six paths or realms, birth into which fixes both who we are, and what we must do.

Where families make their living by a single trade, then, *michi* might be expected to have referred to that occupation, and indeed this is one usage found in Heian court writings. In the *Genji monogatari* 源氏物語, we find the well-known reference to *ki no michi no takumi* 木の道の匠, "one skilled in the way of wood," i.e., a master carpenter.[6] Such usages of *michi* have been understood as fields of specialization, and hence the related term *michi no hito* 道の人 (a man of the way) understood to signify an expert.[7] Thus *sukuyō no kashikoki michi no hito* 宿曜のかしこき道の人 can be interpreted as an expert with a superior knowledge of fortune-telling.[8] There is another nuance to this example, however. The Sinified reading for "many paths," *shodō* 諸道, is used with the specific meaning of the branches of Chinese learning. A Japanese term with a similar meaning is *michimichi* 道々, which is met in the adjective *michimichishi* 道々し meaning "academic," "studious," "learned," or "stiff." Although *michimichi* are generally visualized as studies of Chinese classics, history, and law, they include simply writing poetry in Chinese, as well as those court arts that derived from the mainland—music, dance, and calligraphy (see particularly *michimichi no mono no jōzu* 道々のものの上手 in the *Hana no en* 花宴 chapter)[9]. Something of the expectations concerning the practice of *michimichi* can be seen in the *Eawase* 絵合 chapter: they require teachers

and are studied through the copying of standard models. An important contrast is made in *Eawase* between talent and training. Effortless talent, which in Prince Genji's case reflects his divine descent, is superior to disciplined training. Such distinctions, perhaps characteristic of aristocratic cultures, disappeared in medieval times.

While *michi* could mean specialist occupations, and *michimichi* signified studies of Chinese origin, more general uses of the term *michi* persisted. It could mean a set of circumstances, as in the frequently cited verse: 人の親の心は闇にあらねども子を思ふ道にまどひぬる哉 *hito no oya no / kokoro wa yami ni / aranedomo / ko o omou michi ni / mayoinuru kana* (The mind of a parent is not darkness, but in the path of thinking of his child it becomes confused).[10] *Ko o omou michi* seems simply to have meant: when thinking of his child. *Michi* also continued to mean a way of life, and, in the mouths of lay priests is understood to refer to life in Buddhist orders—that is, *butsudō* 仏道.

In the twelfth century we find a growing fascination among courtiers with the odd ways of life of non-aristocratic specialists. For example, in *Konjaku monogatari* 今昔物語 there are discussions of *yumiya* 弓矢 *no michi*, the way of the warrior, describing the whole warrior lifestyle; and there are also forerunners of the genre of tales about artistic specialists whose values are beyond the grasp of ordinary people. Such stories, in fact, theorized about *michi*, the dedication required and the mysterious powers achieved, through the mouths and acts of the characters described.[11] Meanwhile, specialists in court arts began to write comprehensive accounts of their areas of expertise (*geijutsuron* 芸術論) in which they treated them as ways of life. We find in such writings a cross-fertilization of ideas between arts and borrowings from Buddhism; in particular writings on Japanese poetics adopted images of practice and transmission.[12] Poetry, the common phatic practice of eleventh-century courtiers, became the province of lineages and specialists. A number of ideas of secrecy became part of the self-image of the arts—*kuden* 口伝, secret works, were used to legitimate the authority of their possessors, and the performance of secret pieces (*hikyoku* 秘曲) were forbidden to those not formally certified.[13]

By the fourteenth century, the distinction between *shodō*—courtly education in Chinese arts—and *michi* qua occupation began to dissolve. We see in *Tsurezuregusa* 徒然草 Yoshida Kenkō's 吉田兼好 fascination with *yorozu no michi* 萬の道 (the many paths), which included poetry, music, *kagura* 神楽, *bugaku* 舞楽, calligraphy, painting, preaching, *biwa hōshi* 琵琶法師, *shirabyōshi* 白拍子, archery, riding, falconry, medicine, cooking, construction, physiognomy, yin-yang prediction, kickball (*kemari* 蹴鞠), and various board games. Underlying Kenkō's interest is his perception of parallels between the paths trodden by specialists and the journey from birth to death, and from delusion to enlightenment, enjoined on us all by Buddhism. He is clearly alert to the special character of different *michi*, and finds a fine balance between the particular and the general in each case.[14]

Occupations, aristocratic arts and the Buddhist path at this stage have all come to seem mutually paradigmatic, possessing ideals of training by which an authorized master could guide pupils through the imitation of standard models to the mastery of secrets, certifying them to carry out restricted practices, and leading them to enlightenment. Simultaneously,

the different arts allowed themselves their own particular characters. An interesting case of a literary art that resisted other paradigms is renga. In his renga treatises, Nijō Yoshimoto describes its legendary history (reflecting the assumption that a *michi* be transmitted over many generations), but he denies the need for the imitation of former models, or for teachers and training.[15] He argues that renga arises from the heart and aims to please those present. The only standard is the spontaneous appreciation of participants. As times change so do fashions. One finds similar opinions about renga in *Tsurezuregusa*. It seems that the idea of *michi* was still broad enough to embrace a wide range of possibilities.[16]

Zeami's Paths

Zeami was the first Japanese performer to theorize in writing about the dramatic arts. His works on *sarugaku* (the performance art we now call noh), along with those of his pupil Konparu Zenchiku, provide us with a rich knowledge of how fifteenth-century performers viewed their profession. Both men borrowed intellectual structures and terminology from a number of other *michi*, participating in what we have seen to be a common intellectual process. In Zeami's case, we can see his borrowing to have answered two particular needs.

The first was the bringing of an oral tradition into writing. This was no mere translation from one medium to another. Although Zeami's father's generation was clearly literate,[17] and Zeami had access to some kind of writings on *sarugaku* no longer extant, most of what he received in training was non-verbal—elements of performance would have been demonstrated, and he would have observed much which was not discussed. In addition, there would have been, of course, that experience of practice itself. To write about these experiences demanded systematic organization. Zeami's early writings follow formal structures that are too sophisticated to have been created *ab initio*. It is clear, in fact, that he borrowed particularly from the conventions of treatises in court music and renga. Following these models entailed borrowing not only formal structures and styles of presentation, but also terminology and associated intellectual structures. Thus there is an intimate connection between Zeami's solution to the problems of writing and his appropriation of ideas.

Later in Zeami's life other needs became prominent. He found himself confronted by problems and experiences—changes in his family situation, in the situation of the troupe, in the tastes of audiences and so on—for which his inherited tradition was inadequate. In his mature writings, we find him groping for new ideas and ways to formulate them. This was a second impetus that drove him to investigate the ideas and structures of other traditions.

Zeami's writings fall into two broad periods corresponding with these needs: the recording of his received tradition, and explorations of matters arising out of his experiences. Zeami himself in a late work divided his teachings similarly. Referring to his loss of his heir, Motomasa, he said:

> My aged heart is so excessively concerned with this way of performance, the two legacies of which I am unable to transmit to future generations, that it is sure to become an obstacle to me at the moment of death.[18]

"Two legacies" is my rendering here of the word *niseki* 二跡. In the form *isseki* 一跡 (a single legacy), it was commonly used for an inheritance of property. Zeami's use is particularly interesting, especially in the context of the term that it is linked to: *geidō* 芸道, the "path of entertainment." Here we can see the image of the path organizing Zeami's thinking about the relation between actors, their lives, and their art. *Seki* 跡, the graph of which may also be read *ato*, signifies what is left behind by a person or action. Here, it is clear from context that the two *ato* that Zeami is referring to are not just the works he had written down, but the whole bodies of knowledge accrued on the one hand by his father, Kannami, and on the other, by himself. *Ato* can refer to footprints or tracks. As *geidō* is a path or journey, the *ato*, then, are the footprints made by Zeami and his father along that path, the impressions left of what they did and experienced on that path. Such a formulation of the knowledge to be transmitted from generation to generation emphasizes its basis in lived experience as well as its fragility. It was these fading traces that Zeami needed to pass on to the next generation, if he was to die in peace.[19]

The First Trace: *Fūshikaden*: A Life Plan for Actors, Hana, Fame and Secrecy, Old Age and Metaphors of Battle

Zeami wrote about his received tradition in the collection of seven works entitled *Fūshikaden* 風姿花伝, "the tradition of performance and the flower." *Fūshikaden* mimics the specialist writings found in court music and elsewhere. Such works had developed formal conventions. They were placed within a kind of "wrapping" of preface and colophons in which one would expect to find accounts of the art's mythical and historical origins, and of its transmission through the acknowledged master of the time to the author. Writing down the tradition, normally taboo, would be justified by the danger facing the tradition because of the lack of a suitable heir. The colophon would close with a signature indicating the courtly status of the author and his inheritance of an ancient lineage associated with the art.

All these elements are present in *Fūshikaden*. Zeami opens the first section (the first three books) with a preface that traces the (legendary) history of *sarugaku*, managing to appropriate for it both the standard origin of *kagura* (shrine ritual dances), that is, the dances before the rock cave of Heaven, and an (otherwise unknown) origin in India from the acts of the Buddha. There are references to Zeami's father's great achievements and to the exceptional nature of his tradition. At the end of the third volume Zeami closes with his reasons for writing: "For the house and for the way…unconcerned with the criticisms of the world, but fearful for the decline of our way, certainly not to enlighten outsiders…to provide instruction for my descendants." Zeami signs himself "Saemondayū of the junior lower fifth rank," not, of course, a genuine claim to court rank, but generally explained as a "pseudo-rank" given him to enable access to palaces. He names himself "Hata no Motokiyo," arrogating to himself the ancient surname of the Hata clan, the legendary founders of *sarugaku* in Japan.[20] All of this might have seemed somewhat laughable to those warrior-courtiers for whom Zeami was no more than a beggar.[21]

Zeami also cast *sarugaku* in terms appropriate to common conceptions of a traditional *michi*. A 'way' was a lifetime's task. The first book of *Fūshikaden* maps out a life plan for actors, tracing the training and performances to be followed at certain ages. For example: from his seventh year, the aspiring actor should practice chanting, gestures, and dance, without too much attention to detail; from his twelfth year he should strengthen basic skills, making them accurate and orthodox, rather than exploiting the natural youthful talent for mimicry; from the seventeenth year he should be encouraged to commit himself and continue practicing despite the difficulties of adolescence, and so on. Now this account is on the surface free of ideological shaping, dealing with perhaps inherent matters in the training of performance. The mapping of ages against stages, however, is not inevitable (perhaps recalling *The Analects*?), and does not simply stop at the point where skills have been acquired. The final stage described is for actors over fifty years old. This reflects an expectation that *michi* should be complete ways of life, coincident with whole lives.

As it happens, it is just here that the application of the courtly *michi* model to *sarugaku* was problematic. *Sarugaku* had won the patronage of warrior society by replacing *dengaku* 田楽, another performance art, and had in the process adopted some of its ethos, in which success was closely associated with physical and sexual attractiveness. Throughout *Fūshikaden*, Zeami refers—negatively—to the natural advantages of young performers. According to the expectations of *michi*, the senior actor would be the superior actor. Zeami was bound to feel ambivalent about this issue. Formerly the Yamato *sarugaku* troupes had been organized according to seniority. Zeami's father, Kannami, had broken with this system when he sought the patronage of the third Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimitsu. On the occasion of his first performance before Yoshimitsu, he was pursuaded to usurp the premier role, Okina, normally reserved to the troupe elder (*osa*).[22] He in turn had to watch Yoshimitsu and his cronies making a favorite of his young son. When Zeami wrote *Fūshikaden*, he was approaching his forties, and he had come to an acute awareness of the dangers of relying on youthful charm. On the other hand, he was aware that insistence on the seniority system found in other *michi* was to ignore the tastes of powerful patrons.

It is interesting that Kannami's challenge to the system of seniority should have coincided with the shift from religious to warrior patronage, for troupe seniority was based on religious models (its terminology follows Buddhist convention) whereas the advantages of youth were particularly apparent in the martial arts. Prowess was naturally closely associated with physical strength. The problems facing famous aging warriors was, in fact, a stock theme of *yumiya no michi* stories.

In his account of the training appropriate to an actor's age, Zeami repeatedly warns of the deterioration due to aging. The section for the mid-thirties notes that all but a great actor will find their art declining from the age of forty. For the mid-forties, the question of the lack of physical presence and beauty is crucial; older actors should from this time only perform with a mask. Roles should be chosen that do not involve physical strain. They should make sure that there are younger actors in their troupe well trained and ready to take leading roles. For the fifties and after, Zeami says: "there is nothing else but to do nothing" and compares

the actor to the miraculous flying horse, *ch'i-lin* 麒麟, who "in old age is less use than an ordinary nag."[23]

It was through competitive performances of new plays that Kannami and Zeami won warrior patronage and hence gained access to court culture. It was however the needs of this new arena that could not be reconciled with certain conservative aspects of *michi*. Thus we find that Zeami's expositions actually make use of ideals expressed in arts that were to some degree outside the courtly paradigm, that is renga—Yoshimoto's anti-*michi*—and the martial arts.

Hana and Fame

The most important term that Zeami uses in his characterization of the different stages of a performer's life is *hana* 花 (probably best read "blossom," but commonly translated "flower"). The importance of this metaphor in Zeami's writings is reflected in its presence in the titles of his major works—*Fūshikaden* (the teaching of the flower of artistic appearance), *Kakyō* 花鏡 (the mirror of the flower), *Shikadō* 至花道 (the way to the achievement of the flower), *Shūgyoku Tokka* 拾玉得花 (gathering gems and gaining flowers, and *Kyakuraika* 却来花 (the flower of confronting and returning). Zeami's flower metaphor is variously said to derive from botanical images found in poetic theory or else in Buddhist thought, but it is clear that Zeami's (or Kannami's) usages are to a large extent their own. Botanical figures are widely found in poetic writings, starting with Ki no Tsurayuki's 紀貫之 introduction to the first imperial poetry collection, where seeds and leaves represent the relation between *kokoro* 心 and *kotoba* 詞 (thought and words), and blossoms and fruit represent style and substance. They also appear in a wide range of Buddhist contexts, where the relations of cause and effect are read through those of seed and fruit. Zeami's main use of the image of *hana*, however, is not centrally concerned with the elements of plant life, but rather with the appearance of blossoms in given seasons.

The ideas Zeami expresses through analogies with flowers are intimately connected to poetic ideals found in Nijō Yoshimoto's discussions of renga. As I have suggested above, Yoshimoto treated renga as a kind of anti-*michi*, or at least a poetic art fundamentally different from other elite arts. For Yoshimoto renga was a group production, and its primary aim was to delight its participants. It was to be judged by its effectiveness at the time of composition; it could not be judged by future readers, nor could there be recourse to esoteric tradition if a verse fell flat. It was subject to the feeling of the moment and thus to fashion. Norms could be erected, but they should change with the age. The renga poet, rather than being loyal to a teacher's style, was urged to follow the styles of contemporaries. Yoshimoto concluded that the prime technique of linked verse was, in the final analysis "to make common things appear new."[24] Many of these ideas, which have obvious relevance to performers seeking patronage, resonate with Zeami's writings. In particular Zeami saw an intimate relationship between the enjoyment felt by audiences (*omoshiroki* 面白き) and novelty (*mezurashiki* めづらしき). Novelty fascinated audiences. It was not to be sought, however, by new techniques;

rather it was to be achieved by utilizing standard techniques at appropriate times, just as flowers pleased the world by blooming in their own season.[25]

There are a number of such connections between Yoshimoto's ideas on renga and Zeami's conceptions of *sarugaku*. For example, there is Yoshimoto's contention that the mark of artistic worth is no more that the acclaim of the majority. He (mis-)quotes Mencius: "know that to be good which all the world follows."[26] Zeami frequently gave worldly acclaim and reputation a similarly important place in his writings. For example, discussing actors in their late thirties he says: "the truth is, if you have not won the world's approval by this age, then you cannot consider yourself to have mastered the performance of noh."[27] There are no geniuses languishing unknown.

For aristocratic poets in Yoshimoto's time, renga was hardly a matter of life and death. For the Kanze actors, however, *sarugaku* was their livelihood in a hard world. Thus they could not simply stop at a theory based on following fashion, nor could they embrace Yoshimoto's iconoclastic urges (i.e., "cast aside former masters"[28]). They needed to develop strategies that would ensure their continued grip on the audience, and they also wished to establish *sarugaku* as the waka and not the renga of performance arts. Zeami developed the theory of the flower further by making a distinction between the attraction that was "real" and that which was temporary. The distinction of course reflects the Buddhist dichotomy between the real, which is unchanging and absolute, and the apparent, necessarily fleeting and superficial. The real *hana* was the power to produce something fresh and intriguing on every occasion. The source of this power was both the understanding of the relationship between audience response and novelty, and the extensive mastery of performance techniques and arts both within and without the *sarugaku* tradition. With these, the actor could produce at will something both appropriate and yet rarely seen. This combination Zeami expressed in one of the rare phrases where he does exploit the relations between parts of plants: *hana wa kokoro, tane wa waza narubeshi* 花は心、種は態なるべし, "the flower comes from knowledge but its seed must lie in the technique."[29]

Secrecy and Metaphors of Battle

Whilst Zeami drew on renga for ideals of entertainment he turned to martial arts to discuss approaches to competition. Two particular ideas he took from military strategy were the element of surprise and the role of luck. The first matter he discussed in terms of secrets. This is particularly interesting because Zeami thereby managed to conflate what was essentially a matter of strategy with a central concern of the court arts. In the courtly *michi* tradition, secrecy had a number of roles. For example, families dedicated to Chinese literary skills each had their own textual methods, which were restricted to members of the lineage. This was a form of secret or restricted knowledge. Again in court music, certain pieces termed "secret" were reserved to initiates only. It was not that those pieces were unknown to others, rather that it was forbidden for the uninitiated to perform them.[30] Such pieces often derived from significant occasions, before emperors, or else had divine origins. Zeami says:

> Sometimes a clever military commander may beat a powerful enemy by using a quite unexpected trick. Surely, from the point of view of the loser, he is beaten because he has been deceived by the rarity of his opponent's method. When, after the event, he realizes the stratagem used against him, he can see that it was easy to overcome, but the reason he lost was because he had not understood it at the time. . . . Thus, we can possess the flower all our lives by not letting others know about the secrets that belong to our house.[31]

Thus Zeami converted the ideology of restricted techniques into something akin to the "element of surprise."

Another matter that Zeami discusses with reference to military traditions is that of luck. He quotes an unidentified saying: "Among the gods of competition, there are gods of victory and gods of defeat, who watch over and determine who wins and who loses. This is considered a great secret in the military path." Recognizing the role of the gods in a contest, one should also bear in mind that their influence only lasts a short time. By acting with confidence one can be sure that one's turn will come.[32]

The Second Trace: The Spiritual Path

In *Fūshikaden*, the measure of success for an actor was the acclaim of audiences—especially educated audiences. By winning competitions, the Kanze troupe was able to take advantage of particular historical conditions, for a new political structure was being established, and patronage relations and institutional affiliations were in flux. When the third Ashikaga shogun, Yoshimitsu, adopted *sarugaku* as the premier performance art, and the Kanze as its official practitioners, the Kanze were released from their dependence on the Nara religious organizations. The moment of fluidity soon seems to have passed, and competitive performances became less common. When Yoshimitsu died, the Kanze continued to be the *sarugaku* performers to the shogun, although *sarugaku* itself fell somewhat out of favor. It only regained its former prominence under the sixth shogun, Yoshinori. During his office, when Zeami was in retirement, the Kanze managed to affiliate themselves to a major religious institution in Kyoto, Daigoji temple, and as a result were able to strengthen further their domination of *sarugaku* performed at the capital.

Perhaps because the affiliations of *sarugaku* troupes came again to be determined largely by precedent, we find that Zeami's later writings use the term "*michi*" less and abandon the courtly pretensions of his earlier colophons. Zeami now began to look further afield for intellectual models. He was still absorbed with many of the same questions taken up in *Fūshikaden*, but he began to discuss them in more complex ways, informed by structural patterns adopted from religious and philosophical traditions. Nevertheless, his fundamental conception of his art remained as a way of life in which a person proceeded from stage to stage, from apprenticeship to mastery.

As competition became less important, Zeami began to redefine the terms in which he thought of success. The audience was still important, but emphasis shifted to *mekiki* 目利

き—connoisseurs with refined sensitivities. Even they were not the ultimate arbiters for Zeami, however. In his reminiscences in old age, he looked back to the past for the highest standards; to the performances of great actors in his youth, and to the sensibilities of Yoshimitsu and his entourage, now long dead. Such memories could of course not be externally validated. Zeami therefore found himself in a situation comparable to a Zen master. A Zen master's authority lay in his enlightenment, an inner knowledge for which there was no external verification. To be sure this was a long-standing problem for Zen, which had developed an array of external markers of enlightenment—from robes and bowls to documents of transmission. For Zeami, experiencing challenges to his authority within and without the troupe, the lack of external support for his vision of the higher aesthetic reaches of performance was bitterly felt, as is apparent in the despair that engulfed him at the death of his son Motomasa. Motomasa was the only one of his generation to whom Zeami felt he had communicated his sensibility.[33] As Zeami's understanding of the locus of artistic affirmation shifted from external acclaim to an inner awareness, we find that he progressively discussed the processes of his art in terms of the stages in the Zen path. In his letters to his last pupil, his son-in-law Konparu Zenchiku, he wrote of having given him the "seal" (*inka* 印可), and stated that he should find the answers to his questions by looking in his own mind. He explicitly compared *sarugaku* to the Zen way, referring to a Zen master's statement that it was after the achievement of the dharma (an enlightenment experience) that the real study of the way began. He used the term: verification of enlightenment (*tokuhō no kenjo* 得法の見所) to characterize Zenchiku's level of attainment (signifying his mastery of basic techniques).[34] It is clear that Zeami still thought the way of *sarugaku* was like Zen, not that it *was* Zen. Nevertheless, Zeami increasingly placed more emphasis on the inner awareness of the actor rather than his technical prowess. This change of emphasis can be seen in a fundamental structure that shows itself in many of Zeami's later writings, and which is closely connected to Zen accounts of the way.

In *Fūshikaden*, Zeami expressed the relationship between technique (*waza*) and the understanding of how to have an impact on the audience (*kokoro*) through the metaphor of the seed and the flower. This relationship between technical training and effectiveness in performance was naturally one that concerned Zeami deeply. In other traditions one might expect such questions to be approached in terms of creative talent, personality and experience, but Zeami's conceptions were ultimately dominated by the image of the way. The way consisted of a journey by individuals through particular places (or stages), and those places corresponded to one's status in the art. Thus we find Zeami constructed a model of the way in which the first stages were technical—representing levels of training—and the later stages were mental—levels of understanding. The mental stages were then further distinguished between lower ones, which were deliberate and conscious, and higher ones, which had "unconscious" characteristics. The mental stages progressed from mind (*shin* 心) to "no mind" (*mushin* 無心). This general pattern—body, mind, no-mind—informs Buddhist accounts of the path and is characteristic of Zeami's later thought. The form it takes, however, gives the impression that the pattern from *u* 有 to *mu* 無 (that is from presence to absence) was primary and that the matters described were secondary. That is to say, it seems that Zeami was

looking for the pattern wherever he could find it. This is apparent from the fact that the *mu* or *mushin* element sometimes applied to the actor and sometimes to the audience.[35]

For example, in the section "Understanding the power of the superior performer" in *Kakyō*, Zeami tells us that the first kind of expertise is technical—he who has mastered the technical training is a *tassha* 達者 (accomplished). Such a performer's skills are external, but whether an actor wins acclaim or not is actually dependent on the possession of inner skill. The mind (*kokoro*) is thus more important than technique (*waza*). The possessor of inner skill is termed *jōzu* 上手, the superior performer. Another term Zeami uses for this stage is *shōi* 正位[36] (one who has realized the true nature of things); that is, one who understands the essence of what gives audiences delight (*omoshiroki*). At an even higher stage is the performer who transports the audience beyond their conscious awareness, into a state in which, "unawares, they gasp with delight." Zeami explains this higher skill by referring to *xian* 咸, the thirty-first hexagram of the *I Ching* 易経 signifying mutual "influence." Zeami points out that it is the character *kan* 感, thought, minus the radical for mind 心. It is clear that one of the attractions for Zeami of this explanation was the implication that this influence operated through the omission of conscious awareness.[37]

Here it is in the audience that there is "absence of mind," but elsewhere it is the superior actor's consciousness itself that is denied. A key term here is *myō* 妙, which like much aesthetic vocabulary from medieval Japan has a dual valency depending on whether we read it in religious or artistic contexts. *Myō* was used in Buddhism to translate the Sanskrit "sat"—signifying ultimate reality and hence wonderfulness (as in *Myōhōrengekyō* 妙法蓮華経, the *Saddharma pundarika sutra*). Rimer and Yamazaki's translations of Zeami's writings read this term as "peerless grace."[38] It is quite clear however that Zeami regarded its metaphysical significance as key, for he repeatedly invoked the Buddhist formula: "*Myō* is what cuts off the activities of words, is unthinkable, the cessation of the movements of the mind."[39] In his discussion of the quality of *myō* in *Kakyō*, it is a power in performance which discerning spectators will notice in actors of surpassing skill. The actor himself, though "will be unaware of it." Even in the case of an actor of the highest skill, he will "know no more than that it is present in his performance. He will not be able to choose where he practices it."[40]

Many of Zeami's later formulations place a greater value on qualities that are "*mu*"—unconscious, non-deliberate, background, than those that are "*u*"—conscious, deliberate, prominent. A striking case is his rereading of the general rule for actors over fifty. It will be recalled that he stated in *Fūshikaden* that "there is nothing else but to do nothing" (*senu*). Zeami later converted this into a mysterious technique for the master actor. In *Kakyō*, he described how some actors had the power to delight audiences even when "doing nothing." The reason is that they developed a single mind that linked all the elements of acting including moments when there was no action. The way to develop this power was to practice single-mindedness in all one's moments, waking or sleeping. Scholars have noted the close similarity between this prescription and certain prescriptions for monks by the founder of Sōtō Zen in Japan, Dōgen 道元 (1200-1253), and seen in it a reflection of Zeami's involvement in that sect, but the main point for my argument here is that the negative statement—doing nothing—is here

converted from a despairing acceptance of the ruinous effects of old age into a positive inner technique possessed by the spiritually advanced actor.

Another structure that Zeami adopted from Zen to organize the path of acting is expressed in the two phrases, sometimes combined: *kōko* 向去 (going off) and *kyakurai* 却来 (coming back). These terms are typical of a certain kind of medieval usage. In Chinese, they were ordinary words that developed a technical meaning within Zen. Within Japan, they lost their ordinary significance, and were taken to be imported Zen terms. They were then taken up in the arts where, as in the case under consideration, their usage reflected a perceived analogy between the art and Zen.[41] Subsequently they lost their Zen significance, and survived only as specialist artistic terms. *Kōko* and *kyakurai* are defined in a dialog in the Chinese Zen transmission compilation *Jiatai pudeng lu* 嘉泰普燈録 of 1204:

> A monk asked: What is he like, a person who has "gone off"?
> "White clouds scattered against the gullies vanish,
> the blue peaks leaning against the void stand tall."
>
> A monk asked: What is he like, a person who has "come back"?
> "Head full of white hair, he leaves the rocky valley,
> At midnight, the clouds pierced, he enters the market place."[42]

These are stages in the aspirant's search for enlightenment. First, he abandons the world and its attachments and practices in detached isolation. Later, having attained enlightenment, he descends from above the clouds to the vulgar world without danger. The image of the return to the vulgar world, symbolized by the market place, was naturally attractive in the medieval Japanese Zen world, just as that of Vimalakirti, the enlightened householder, had been in an earlier age. It was well-known through its presence in the Oxherding picture sequence.[43]

Some of Zeami's uses of *kōko* and *kyakurai* are not quite straightforward,[44] but here we are interested in their application to levels of performance, which is less problematic. In *Kyūi* 九位 (The Nine Levels), where Zeami attempts to relate levels of mastery to grades of performance, the use of the term *kyakurai* reflects the perception of an analogy between the Zen and acting path. Zeami's analysis of nine levels lists progressively lower levels of performance quality, from the highest three—all named as flower styles—through three middle grades, relating to technical mastery, to three lower levels—strong, rough and dull. In a second section, Zeami traces the appropriate progression of the actor through these levels. Starting at the lower end of the middle group (i.e., number six from the top), the actor strives to master the techniques of the middle three stages in turn. Once these have become easy, the actor has "received the dharma" (*tokuhō*). Progressing now upwards into the three flower levels, the highest is achieved when "language is cut, and the non-dualism of intent and appearance is made manifest." This training path has not intersected with the three lower levels, which are the destiny of those who fail even to acquire the skills developed in the middle group. It is permissible, however, for an actor who has mastered the upper levels, to "come back" (*kyakurai*) to these lowest levels, to amuse himself and surprise audiences.

This system is useful and interesting in a number of ways. Let us clarify the similarity between the paths of acting and Zen that it illustrates. The spiritual aspirant practices techniques until he achieves the first mastery—"enlightenment experience" *tokuhō*. If this is not gained, he is destined to spend his days caught in the world of illusion. If it is gained, however, it will be deepened by progressive practice until the final breakthrough. At that point duality is finally overcome and the world of samsara and nirvana seen to be one. Now the practitioner is free to return and play in the world of illusion without danger. This structure applied to the actor's path brings together and solves a number of problems relating to questions of orthodoxy and creativity that concerned Zeami in earlier writings. Essentially it allows Zeami to insist that the trainee eschew unorthodox techniques and roughness in performance, but also approves such deviations when deliberately performed by a master to create novelty. The terminology employed derives from Zen, but it is important to note that the overall plan bears a similarity to the training structure developed in poetics, too: in waka, Fujiwara no Teika established an order of training that started with gentle styles, progressed through finer styles, and finally attempted rough and unrefined poems.

A striking feature of Zeami's *Nine Levels* system is its separation of levels of performance and stages in training. As I mentioned above, in the Buddhist path there is no such separation. The personality of the practitioner is itself no more than a place on the path—it has no abiding reality. When the goal is achieved, the individual self is gone, and all that is left is the Buddha nature. The path is a journey of inner transformation. But in performance, the Kanze troupe needed to develop refined styles suitable for aristocratic consumption, and had rejected other styles (those of competing troupes) which it considered vulgar and rough. Thus the terrain to be traversed by the aspiring actor included areas where he should not go, and the path through the terrain could no longer simply be a straight line from lower to higher. The *Nine Levels* provides an inclusive picture of styles of acting, and separately traces an approved path through them.

We have seen that Zeami started by adopting the model of the way found in court performance arts to present his oral tradition, but actually drew on more or less heterodox paths for his ideals of value and practice. In later writings, he began to look for patterns deriving from Zen, and thereby was able to adjust his notion of the actor's path to changes in the circumstances of his troupe, and solve certain problems concerning orthodoxy in performance, the matter of aging, and changing tastes in performance. One of the reasons for Zeami's attractiveness to modern scholars is the fact that the image of the actor's path that he arrives at appears to them recognizable in the traditional arts today. Hence the view of Konishi Jin'ichi, that what we see as the image of the path in Zeami is in fact the coalescence of ideas of traditional specialization foreshadowed in *gagaku*, in poetic works, and in some of the writings of Dōgen, Yoshida Kenkō, and Nijō Yoshimoto into an ideal form, one that was to grip the medieval age and dominate traditional Japanese arts up to the present time. Still, the stability of that form was much less than such assertions imply. Not only did important aspects of Zeami's vision of the path, such as the priority of actors in their physical prime, or the need to adjust performance to audience tastes, have little presence in later traditions, there were other

intellectual tendencies in the fifteenth century that led to quite different formulations of the path. An example of this is found in the work of Zeami's son-in-law, Zenchiku. His vision in fact may be thought more essentially medieval, being rooted in specifically medieval ways of thought (that is the unity of the three creeds, certain beliefs about the relationship between spiritual and material reality, and new Shinto theories). The prime element in Zenchiku's thought is the essential unity in all human traditions observable in structures found across disciplinary boundaries. Whereas Zeami borrowed structures and terminology to formulate and solve issues that confronted him in practice, Zenchiku put priority on the model he had arrived at intellectually, and sought formulations of his art that fit the model, which he could then regard as authoritative.

Zenchiku's Path

In his definition of the path, Zenchiku took a model of the arising and fading of phenomenal reality which drew on Shinto, Confucian, and Buddhist thought, and tried to organize within it the stages in the actor's life that he had inherited in his own training.[45] It seems clear that he felt that both the model and the system of stages described entry into the world of form of profound and ancient forces, and therefore expected them to follow similar patterns. When he first pursued this idea, it looked promising, but as he tried to bring more elements of his tradition into the model, problems arose which exposed fundamental difficulties. The model for the structures he identified are well-known as the *rokurin ichiro* 六輪一露 diagrams (that is, the Six Circles and Single Dewdrop).

The process by which Zenchiku discovered or invented these diagrams, and the rationale underlying his application of them are significant and complex problems, which I have

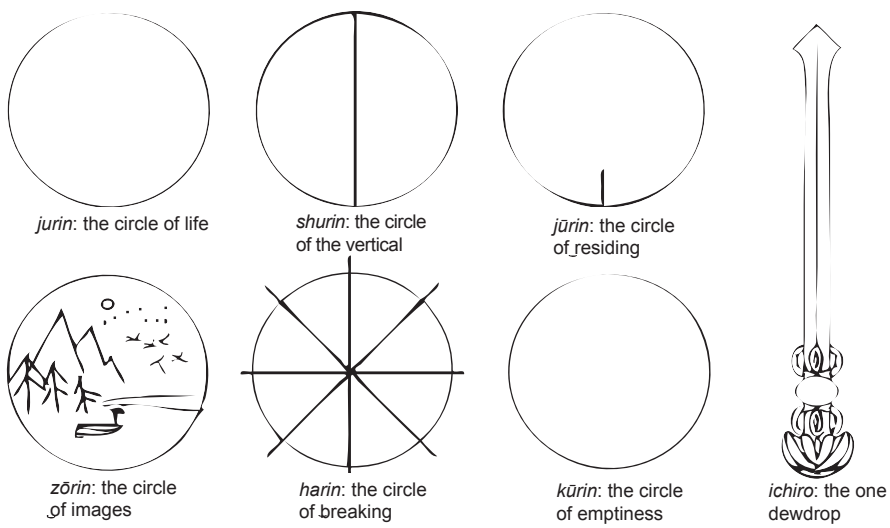

Figure: The Six Circles and Single Dewdrop.

investigated in detail elsewhere.[46] Here, however, I will focus on how he applied them to the stages in an actor's life. He introduced the diagrams as follows:

> Now, the way of the household task of *sarugaku* is to exhaust beauty with the body and to "create pattern with the voice." Hereby "unwittingly the hands gesture and the feet tread." Consequently, this must surely be the mysterious operation (*myōyū* 妙用) of what is fundamentally without master and without phenomena. That is why the forms of the six circles and the dewdrop have been provisionally attained; the first is called the circle of life (*jurin* 寿輪), the second is called the circle of the vertical (*shurin* 竪輪), the third is called the circle of abiding (*jūrin* 住輪), the fourth is called the circle of images (*zōrin* 像輪), the fifth is called the circle of breaking (*harin* 破輪), the sixth the circle of emptiness (*kūrin* 空輪), the dewdrop (*ichiro* 一露) is the highest, most important stage.[47]

The phrases in quotation marks derive from the "Greater Preface" to the Mao version of the Chinese classic of poetry, the *Book of Odes*. This preface included a brief discussion of the origins of poetry which it derived from instinctive reactions to emotion: mental impulses seeking expression first verbally, then if they were still not fully expressed, in heaving and sighing, then, again, in singing and chanting, and finally, if even these were insufficient, in unwitting gesticulations and pacing about. Zenchiku treats this ancient description as a description of *sarugaku* performance, and concludes that, as it is "unwitting," such performance must be *myōyū*, the functioning (*yū* 用) of the absolute (*myō* 妙). Its origins must therefore be *mushumubutsu* 無主無物, something not controlled and not phenomenal, i.e., the primary and formless absolute reality. Zenchiku then claims to have attained from somewhere a model of the way in which the absolute functions, which he represents in his set of diagrams.

The six circular diagrams traced a progression from emptiness into form and back to emptiness.

In his reading of the first three of them, Zenchiku included vocabulary which makes it plain that he saw a correspondence between them and early stages in *sarugaku* training.

> The first, the circle of life *jurin*, it is the source of *yūgen* 幽玄 (grace) in song and dance, the vessel that generates emotion when dance is seen and chanting heard. Because it makes the lifespan complete and long, it is called the circle of life.
>
> In the second *shurin*, the circle of the vertical, the rising stroke having become spirit, the vertical and horizontal appear and give rise to pure roles (*seikyoku*[48] 清曲). Here, then, the feeling of the highest fruition (*jōka no kan* 上果の感) is fully possessed (*nushi* [or *shu*] *tari* 主たり).
>
> In the third *jūrin*, the circle of abiding, the position of the short stroke is a settled locus (*ansho* 安所) that forms the many roles (*shotei* 諸体) including such vigorous performance roles as mad women and demons (*seikyoku* 生曲).[49]

One finds in Zeami's accounts of the traditional order of training much of the vocabulary that appears in these readings. Training in *sarugaku* followed the order: *nikyoku santei* 二曲

三体, where *nikyoku* meant the two arts—singing and dancing—and *santei* the three roles old man, woman, and warrior. One had to study these elements in turn till they were fully mastered (*nushi nari* 主なり). The proper training in childhood of the "two arts" was the root of the presence of *yūgen* in performances in later life. The "three roles" were the gate to the style of "highest fruition" (*jōka* 上果). When one had practiced to the point where all these techniques were easy, the "settled (or easy) level" (*an'i* 安位), the ability to perform the many roles (*shotei* 諸体) would arise naturally, including the body shaking foot stamping "vigorous roles" (*seikyoku* 生曲).[50]

There are slight differences in Zenchiku's vocabulary (natural perhaps in that he came from a different branch of the tradition) but it is sufficiently similar for one to see that he homologizes the same stages onto the three circles, starting from song and dance, the root of *yūgen*, in circle one; mastering (*nushi*) the three roles (*seikyoku* 清曲, pure arts), the gate to the highest fruition (*jōka*), in circle two; to finding the settled locus (*ansho*) and mastering the many roles, including vigorous ones, (*shotei* and *seikyoku* 生曲) in circle three.

Zenchiku's description of the remaining circles in this account of the system uses very little *sarugaku* related vocabulary, but in a later version from *Rokurin ichiro no kichū* the connection to stages in training is made more explicit:

> Fourth, the circle of images *zōrin*. Singing, dance and technique become like each thing portrayed, the stage where things are ordered and differentiated, without forgetting the upper three circles of higher levels.
>
> Fifth, the circle of breaking *harin*. Singing is fully mature and dance has heterodox appearances (*isō* 異相) and reverse styles, but the actor naturally keeps within the constraints of the upper three fruitions.
>
> Sixth, the circle of emptiness *kūrin*. Penetrating deeper and deeper, song and dance dry up and are exhausted, the style of blossoms remaining on an old tree. The roles are few and unstylish, he returns to the original circle of life.
>
> The one dewdrop *ichiro* is the spirit that connects these six circles.[51]

Here the fourth circle is taken to represent the stage at which the performance of every type of role is perfected. It will be recalled that Zeami believed that the actor who had attained mature mastery could employ heterodox techniques eschewed in the period of preliminary training. Although in later works, as we have seen, he applied the terminology of *kōko kyakurai* in such cases, in earlier works he referred to it with the terms *hifū* (unorthodox styles) and *isō* (heterodox appearances). It is the last of these terms that Zenchiku uses in his reading of the fifth circle. The sixth circle uses another image that is seen in Zeami's writing. Referring to his father Kannami in ripe middle age as an example of the ideal actor at the end of his performance life, Zeami used the figure of blossoms on an old tree.

There are some readjustments of the distribution of the stages between the first reading found in *Rokurin ichiro no ki*, and the later one in *Rokurin ichiro no kichū*. Still it is clear that

in these readings, Zenchiku was trying to frame the stages of an actor's life in order, using the six circles. We can see that what he was attempting to do here was different in kind from what Zeami was attempting with his intellectual borrowings. Zeami (and others like him) modified and stretched paradigms from other fields to analyze and express their own traditions. Zenchiku, however, struggled to fit his inherited *sarugaku* tradition to a particular model, one that he never substantially changed. The diagrams, whatever their origins, possessed great authority in Zenchiku's mind, and he was prepared to juggle his tradition to fit them. This becomes particularly clear in later works, in which Zenchiku attempts two quite different new homologies of the stages in training onto the diagrams.[52] In the end, the actor's path was to become for Zenchiku much less significant than spiritual commitment, moral character and inheritance of a lineage.[53]

The *rokurin ichiro* diagrams, and their multiple interpretations in terms of Confucian, Buddhist and Shinto traditions, as well as in the terms of poetics and *sarugaku*, were preserved in the Konparu house through several hundred years, but we can see little or no sign that they had any discernible effect on *sarugaku* traditions after Zenchiku's lifetime. They are an extraordinary expression of an deep belief in the unity of human traditions and the unity of man and cosmos. This way of thought is visible in other theoretical works on the arts. Zenchiku's contemporary Shinkei 心敬 (1406-1475), writing about linked verse, routinely sought parallels to his comments on poetry in Buddhist and Confucian works. In later generations we can faintly see something similar in *Gorin no sho* 五輪書, Musashi's work on sword-fighting, which is organized around the five circles of the elements: earth, water, fire, wind, and space. Presumably the reason why Musashi expected these five elements to organize an account of the way of fighting was that he believed them to be the principles that underlay the world itself.

While Zenchiku represents, then, a particularly medieval style of thought, in which a belief in the unity of traditions takes priority over practical differences, from the perspective of history he appears as a proponent of a heterodox view of *michi*. Zeami, on the other hand, although elements of his inherited tradition were to be dropped from the ideals of future generations, has been felt by many since his works emerged a century ago, to be the quintessential expression of a conception underlying all Japanese traditional arts. His emphasis on such matters as the need for popular support, for flexibility and sensitivity to audience tastes, and for the troupe to preserve unity in performance, and support the interpretation of its central performer, have little presence in the subsequent noh tradition. But the spirit of his description of the actor's path has in general been felt exemplary of all traditional Japanese artistic paths.

Concluding Thoughts

To those familiar with Western traditions reading medieval writings on noh, there appear to be two striking omissions: discussions of the role of talent and personal interpretation in the success of actors and analysis of the artifact itself, the noh play.

In relation to the actor's personal characteristics, Zeami does mention natural talent—the "bone" of his theory of skin, flesh and bone—but he does not appear to think of it as in any profound way rooted in the individual. It might be useful here to recall the roots of the word "talent" as it has become established in the English language. A talent was a unit of weight or money. In the biblical "parable of the talents," a master entrusted certain sums to servants when he went away on a journey. When he returned, he rewarded those who had increased their money by trade, but he criticized and punished the one who had simply stored the money without putting it to use. This story is of course open to a number of interpretations, but one way in which it has commonly been understood is as describing God's gift of differing levels of innate capacity to people at birth and the associated duty of individuals to develop whatever talents they received. These talents are perceived to be essential characteristics of the individual soul, inscrutably determined by God.

Essential personal qualities play very little role in Zeami's discussions. His repeated attempts to answer the question why performances of less trained actors could be more successful that those of senior actors founder on this apparent blind spot; the explanations he offers, the charm of youth, or the effective player's greater understanding of audience response, seem to ignore the obvious. The discussions of Kannami's performances and of Zeami's own, in *Sarugaku dangi*, point to a depth of natural talent, of charisma and creativity, in both men. From the viewpoint of the European tradition of the arts, one might argue that it was surely their innate capacity (that is, a mysterious inborn power, perhaps of divine origin) that brought Zeami and Kannami, among the other specialists of their day, to the highest levels of patronage.

That is not to say that the question of skill was not a central matter in medieval discussions of the arts, and indeed in medieval life generally. It was an important issue in the medieval inheritance system; when choosing an heir, practical skill in the household task was expected to overrule personal preference and primogeniture. Such ability, however, was thought to derive primarily from the combination of attitude and lineage: the receipt by a diligent and dedicated pupil of a certified tradition from a recognized master. The terms in which the process of acquiring ability was discussed commonly reflected the model of Buddhist ideas of the path. For example, master artists, poets and musicians admired in late- and post-Heian setsuwa, are described as whole-heartedly abandoning their attachments to the world. This detachment freed them from constraints that would otherwise interfere with their progress towards higher attainment.[54] We might say then that the medieval world understood ability not to be rooted in the individual personality, which was seen as superficial, but rather in the knowledge that derived from erasure or detachment from self. The potential for mastery was impersonal, present in all who took the appropriate steps. In other words, it was like the Buddha-nature.

Another related characteristic of *michi*-based views of the arts is the relative lack of emphasis on the analysis of the artifact itself, particularly in contrast to the training of the practitioner. In Zeami's *Sandōshū*, it is true, we see him describe procedures for generating the ideal play, incorporating the *jo-ha-kyū* 序破急 (introduction, development, denouement)

pattern common to many arts of his time. And Zenchiku, for his part, sought an aesthetic classification of noh plays. But Zeami does not provide any dramatic analysis to justify his guidelines, which are described in a surprisingly formulaic and mechanical fashion, and Zenchiku's typologies, being based on an attempt to identify noh with the poetic tradition, focus on unchanging qualities in the main roles and ignore the fundamental fact that plays unfold through time. This does seem characteristic of theoretical discussions of Japanese arts. In renga, for example, there are intricate rules, but little discussion of why they should result in excellent poems, and in flower-arranging there are detailed accounts of what, without much explanation of why. It is of course just this peripheral character of the artifact which makes it possible for the *michi* concept to embrace arts with no artifact, like the tea ceremony, or sword-fighting.

In the European tradition, matters are very different. Not only do we have the extraordinary analyses of art and performance works deriving from classical Greek thought, developing such ideas as proportion, symmetry, decor, unity, character, plot, spectacle, tragedy, comedy, catharsis and so on, such thought has played an important role in the work of Western artists, performers and dramatists. In Western dramatic, musical, and terpsichorean training, the analysis of the works and of famous performances is commonly treated as a primary basis for the creation of current and future individual works and interpretations.

Still, it is not self-evident that having a rich vocabulary of ideas for analysis and being able to perform beautifully are the same thing. Observing that a performance is not a lecture, an elucidation for the audience of the performer's analysis of the work, musicologist Fred Maus has recently expressed doubts concerning the value of analysis in generating performance itself. It is rather the completion of the composition process, he argues, that results in the artifact itself, the performance, which the audience is free to analyze in its own fashion.[55]

A tradition such as noh that teaches the processes (that is, the *michi*) by which art is created can be capable of presenting profound, subtle and sophisticated works, the nature of which critics and scholars can argue about. Such a division of interest is unlikely to be generally acceptable in the world of Western arts, and this is all the more the case when there are areas, for example recently in the visual arts, where one sometimes senses a tendency to excessive ideation. Surely we have much to learn from traditions that concentrate on the process which creates the artist and the art work, rather than the analysis of the art work itself.

Acknowledgments

I thank Professor Rein Raud of Helsinki University for his valuable comments on an earlier version of this study, Professor Anna Shields for her insights into translating the Zen dicta on page 42, and also Professor James Baxter for his editorial gaze. I would moreover like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Kuriyama Shigehisa (now of Harvard University) and the many other faculty and staff at Nichibunken who made me feel so welcome as a visiting research scholar (2004-2005). Not only was it a particularly productive year for me in terms of research, it was a great pleasure for me and my family to be able to dwell within the Nichibunken community.

ABBREVIATIONS

NKBT *Nihon koten bungaku taikei* 日本古典文学大系. Iwanami Shoten.

NST *Nihon shisō taikei* 日本思想大系. Iwanami Shoten, 1970-1982.

REFERENCES

Besshi kuden

Zeami 世阿弥. *Besshi kuden* 別紙口伝. In NST 24.

Buswell and Gimello 1992

Robert E. Buswell Jr. and Robert M. Gimello, eds. *Paths to Liberation: The Marga and its Transformations in Buddhist Thought.* Kuroda Institute and University of Hawai'i Press, 1992.

Fūshikaden

Zeami 世阿弥. *Fūshikaden* 風姿花伝. In NST 24.

Genji monogatari

Genji monogatari 源氏物語. In NKBT 14-18.

Goi

Zeami 世阿弥. *Goi* 五位. In NST 24.

Ishiguro 1985

Ishiguro Kichijirō 石黒吉次郎. "'Tsurezuregusa' no geinōkan no ichi kōsatsu" 徒然草の芸能観の一考察. *Kokugo to kokubungaku* 国語と国文学 (June 1985).

Jūmonsaihishō

Nijō Yoshimoto 二条良基. *Jūmonsaihishō* 十問最秘抄. In NKBT 66.

Kakyō

Kanze Motoyoshi 観世元能. *Kakyō* 花鏡. In NST 24.

Kapleau 1980

Philip Kapleau. *The Three Pillars of Zen: Teaching, Practice and Enlightenment* (revised and expanded edition). London: Rider, 1980.

Klein 2002

Susan Blakeley Klein. *Allegories of Desire: Esoteric Literary Commentaries of Medieval Japan* (Harvard-Yenching Institute Monograph Series, 55). Harvard University Asia Center, 2002.

Kobayashi 1958

Kobayashi Shizuo 小林靜雄. *Zeami* 世阿彌. Hinoki Shoten, 1958.

Koga 1991
Koga Hidehiko 古賀英彦 ed. *Zengo jiten* 禅語辞典. Kyoto: Shibunkaku Shuppan, 1991.

Konparu tayū ate shojō
Zeami 世阿弥. *Konparu tayū ate shojō* 金春大夫宛書状. In NST 24.

Konishi 1961
Konishi Jin'ichi 小西甚一. *Nōgakuron kenkyū* 能楽論研究. Hanawa Shobō, 1961.

Konishi 1975
———. *"Michi": Chūsei no rinen* 「道」：中世の理念. Kōdansha, 1975.

Kyakuraika
Zeami 世阿弥. *Kyakuraika* 却来華. In NST 24.

Lafleur 1983
William R. Lafleur. *The Karma of Words: Buddhism and the Literary Arts in Medieval Japan.* University of California Press, 1983.

Legge 1899
James Legge. *I Ching (Sacred Books of the East 16)*. Oxford University Press, 1899.

Lévi-Strauss 1966
Claude Lévi-Strauss. *The Savage Mind.* London: George Wiedenfeld and Nicolson, 1966.

Maus 1999
Fred Everett Maus. "Musical Performance as Analytic Communication." In Salim Kemal and Ivan Gaskell, eds. *Performance and Authenticity in the Arts*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Nishio 1961
Nishio Minoru 西尾実. *Nihon Bungeishi ni okeru chūseiteki na mono to sono tenkai* 日本文芸史における中世的なものとその展開. Iwanami Shoten, 1961.

Nose 1942
Nose Asaji 能勢朝次. "Zeami no geiron ni okeru 'kurai'" 世阿弥の芸論における「位」. *Bungaku* 文学 10:4 (1942).

Pandey 1995
Rajyashree Pandey. "Love, poetry and renunciation: changing configuration of the ideal of suki." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 5:2 (July 1995), pp. 225-44.

Pandey 1998
———. *Writing and Renunciation in Medieval Japan: the Works of the Poet-Priest Kamo no Chōmei*. Center for Japanese Studies, University of Michigan, 1998.

Pinnington 1997
Noel John Pinnington. "Crossed Paths: Zeami's Transmission to Zenchiku." *Monumenta Nipponica* 52:2 (Summer 1997), pp. 201-234.

Pinnington 1998
———. "Invented Origins: Muromachi Interpretations of *Okina sarugaku*." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 61:3 (1998), pp. 492-518.

Pinnington forthcoming
———. *Traces in the Way:* Michi *in the Writings of Komparu Zenchiku*. Forthcoming from East Asia Program, Cornell University, publication anticipated in 2006.

Rimer and Yamazaki 1984
J. Thomas Rimer and Yamazaki Masakazu, eds. and trans. *On the Art of Nō Drama: The Major Treatises of Zeami.* Princeton University Press, 1984.

Rokurin ichiro no ki
Konparu Zenchiku 金春禅竹. *Rokurin ichiro no ki* 六輪一露之記. In *Konparu kodensho shūsei* 金春古伝書集成. Wan'ya Shoten, 1969.

Rokurin ichiro no ki chū
———. *Rokurin ichiro no ki chū* 六輪一露之記注. In *Konparu kodensho shūsei* 金春古伝書集成. Wan'ya Shoten, 1969.

Sarugaku dangi
Kanze Motoyoshi 観世元能. *Sarugaku dangi* 申楽談儀. In NST 24.

Sasaki 1954
Sasaki Nobutsuna 佐佐木信綱, ed. *Shinkun Man'yōshū* 新訓万葉集, vol. 1. (Revised edition, Iwanami Bunko 670.) Iwanami Shoten, 1954.

Shikadō
Zeami 世阿弥. *Shikadō* 至花道. In NST 24.

Ueda 1967
Makoto Ueda. *Literary and Art Theories in Japan.* Press of Western Reserve University, 1967.

Ueki 1974
Ueki Yukinobu 植木行宣. "Gakusho no seikō to geiron" 楽書の盛行と芸論. *Geinōshi kenkyū* 芸能史研究 45 (April 1974), pp. 31-43.

Wilson 1973
William Ritchie Wilson. "The Way of the Bow and Arrow: The Japanese Warrior in *Konjaku Monogatari*." *Monumenta Nipponica* 28:2 (1973), pp. 190-233.

NOTES

[1] That is, the application of available tools to a job for which they were not intended (Lévi-Strauss 1966, pp. 16-33).
[2] Buswell and Gimello 1992, pp. 1-36.
[3] That is found in the Bible, Matthew 25:14-30. I return to this point in the conclusion to this study, below.
[4] The primary statement is, I believe, in Konishi 1975, but he has presented several versions elsewhere.
[5] The final lines of *Man'yōshū* 万葉集 892 (mixed *kana* and *kanji* version follows Sasaki 1954, pp. 229).
[6] *Genji monogatari*, vol. 1, p. 68.
[7] For example, *Genji monogatari*, vol. 5, p. 79.
[8] *Genji monogatari*, vol. 1, p. 45.
[9] *Genji monogatari*, vol. 1, p. 310.
[10] *Gosenshū* 御撰集 1103.
[11] For the Yumiya stories, see Wilson 1973. For a discussion of others, see Pinnington forthcoming, chapter 2.
[12] See translation and discussion in LaFleur 1983, pp. 90-1.
[13] For an account of the development of secrecy in court music, see Ueki 1974.
[14] For a discussion of Kenkō and *michi*, see Ishiguro 1985.
[15] This may be connected to Teika's apparent rejection of the need for teachers in poetry, but clashes with his admiration for old poems. See Klein 2002, pp. 89-91.
[16] See Ueda 1967, pp. 37-54.
[17] It is sometimes thought that Kannami was exceptional in this regard, but we only know for certain of one actor of his generation who was illiterate (i.e., Jūni Gonnokami; see his dictated letter in *Sarugaku dangi*, p. 300).
[18] *Kyakuraika*, p. 246.
[19] For a detailed discussion of this passage, see Pinnington forthcoming, introductory chapter.
[20] See *Fūshikaden*, pp. 14, 19-20, 37.
[21] As he was described in the diary *Go-gumaiki* 後愚昧記, quoted in Kobayashi 1958, pp. 19-20.
[22] This was a particularly important occasion, not only because it was the first performance before the shogun, leading to centuries of military support for Yamato sarugaku, but also because it marked the abridgement and relegation to secondary status of the ritual play *Shikisanban*. See Pinnington 1998, 498-9.
[23] *Fūshikaden*, p. 19.
[24] *Jūmonsaihishō*, p. 115.
[25] "Flowers only bloom in their season, so when their time comes their novelty gives pleasure. In sarugaku too, it is when performance is felt to be unusual that people enjoy it." *Besshi kuden*, p. 55.
[26] *Jūmonsaihishō*, p. 114.
[27] *Fūshikaden*, p. 18.
[28] *Jūmonsaihishō*, p. 113.
[29] *Fūshikaden*, p. 37. I follow Omote and Katō in my reading of this phrase and ignore Nishio Minoru's view that it is a deliberate inversion of Ki no Tsurayuki's famous dictum in his preface to the *Kokinshū* 古今集 (Nishio 1961, p. 322, also found in Lafleur 1983, p. 126).

[30] A case of this kind of "secret" appears in the account of Kamo no Chōmei's unauthorized playing of the *Takuboku* 啄木 piece on his biwa and subsequent expulsion from the capital, found the early Kamakura collection *Bunkidan* 文机談, discussed in Pandey 1998, p. 60).
[31] *Fūshikaden*, p. 62.
[32] *Fūshikaden*, pp. 63-64.
[33] The Kanze troupe had divided into two, one led by Motomasa, representing Zeami's own choice for the succession, and another led by Onnami, Zeami's nephew and a favorite of the shogun Yoshinori. Zeami never left any writings to Onnami, and so we can take it that he did not accept Onnami's inheritance of the troupe. Yoshinori's patronage of Onnami and Motomasa's death led to Onnami's troupe being treated as the orthodox line, inheriting the various Kanze rights of performance in Nara and the capital.
[34] See *Konparu tayū ate shojō*, pp. 316-19. I discussed these letters in greater detail in Pinnington 1997, pp. 222-24.
[35] For a discussion of this pattern, see Nose 1942.
[36] Zeami's orthography is not consistent; elsewhere he writes 性位, which could be interpreted to mean one who had penetrated to the real essence (of a given matter). Zeami very likely, though, had in mind the Zen term 証位, signifying one whose enlightenment experience has been verified.
[37] *Kakyō*, pp. 95-6. Legge also discusses the omission of the mind radical, which he explains was "to indicate the most important element . . . the absence of all purpose or motive," (Legge 1899, p. 124).
[38] Throughout Rimer and Yamazaki 1984.
[39] For example, in *Goi,* p. 170.
[40] *Kakyō*, p. 101.
[41] Another example of such a term is: *shoshin* 初心, the "beginner's mind."
[42] As cited in Koga 1991, pp. 83, 127.
[43] The *Jūgyūzu* 十牛図 attributed to the twelfth-century Chinese monk Kuoan Shiyuan 廓庵師遠. The last picture is entitled "entering the market place" (see Kapleau 1980, p. 323).
[44] See Konishi's discussion in Konishi 1961, pp. 231-7.
[45] I should note here that this statement reflects my own interpretation of the early stages of Zenchiku's *rokurin ichiro* theory, as discussed in greater detail in Pinnington forthcoming, chapter 5. Other scholars interpret the material differently.
[46] Chapter 5 of Pinnington forthcoming.
[47] *Rokurin ichiro no ki*, p. 197.
[48] The reader should note that the romanized "seikyoku" in the following discussion represents two different compounds, 清曲 and 生曲 (the actual pronunciation is open to doubt). To distinguish them, I follow them with their character representations whenever they occur.
[49] *Rokurin ichiro no ki*, p. 197-200.
[50] I take the order and terminology from Zeami's outline of the stages of training in *Shikadō*, pp. 112-14.
[51] *Rokurin ichiro no kichū*, p. 219. I switch from one version of Zenchiku's interpretation to another to avoid an overly complex account, but for a full discussion of both texts, see chapter 5 of Pinnington forthcoming.
[52] For details, again see chapter 5 of Pinnington forthcoming.
[53] See chapter 6 of Pinnington forthcoming.
[54] The ideal of *suki*. See Pandey 1995.
[55] Maus 1999, pp. 129-53.

要旨

能の理論における「道」のモデル

ノエル・ジョン・ピニングトン

平安時代後期から日本の芸能者は、彼らの芸術を説明する一連の書物を記してきた。それらの書物の基底にあるのは、「道」としての芸術であり、そのイメージはすべての専門分野を統一する基盤を示唆している。この統一は、異なる分野の知識を横断する創造的で知的な借用を生み、さらには芸術家を訓練し、芸術品を生む真摯な探求の過程をもたらした。しかし同時に、「道」の芸術は、美学的分析の欠如と「個人」として芸術家を捉えることへの興味の希薄を引き起こした。本論文では、「道」の形成期における知的な取り組みの典型として１５世紀の能役者の世阿弥と禅竹の書物を分析する。結語では、「道」についての書物の特徴と、ヨーロッパの伝統における美術理論の取り組みとの対比を試みた。